

THE HOLY SPIRIT

AND THE INDIVIDUAL

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AND THE INDIVIDUAL

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Theology

THE HOLY SPIRIT & THE INDIVIDUAL

AN APPEAL TO EXPERIENCE

BY

ARTHUR W. ROBINSON, D.D.

CANON OF CANTERBURY

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THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE INDIVIDUAL

INTRODUCTION

IF Christianity is really the Gospel which is to answer to the hopes and meet the needs of mankind, we may reasonably ask that it should satisfy certain obvious requirements. We should expect, for example, that the account it has to give of the origin and ordering of the world will be in harmony with what we are justified in accepting as the well-assured results of our hardly won knowledge of the physical universe, and will be such, moreover, as will shed light upon the difficult problem presented by the working of influences which appear to be at enmity with that which our moral sense is able to recognise as good.

Then, again, we should be disappointed and stumble if the Christian ideal of human achievement and destiny did not win from us high admiration and respect, and did not stimulate us to put forth the very best endeavours of which we are capable.

Nor would this be the whole of what we should feel entitled to ask. The Good News would lack consistency, and would fail to secure our most eager attention, if it did not tell us of a Power by which our efforts could be reinforced and sustained, and by which we ourselves might be made worthy of our place in the better order for which we are encouraged to hope.

There may be those who have no painful consciousness of failure and inability, and who have never known what it is to lift their eyes to the hills with an anxious inquiry for help; but these, if they exist, are in a small minority. Nothing in the history of the race has been plainer or more universal than the deeply implanted yearning for a "That not ourselves" which can bring us guidance and strength. The desire is not less insistent now than it has been in the past. So far from abating, it has grown with our dissatisfaction with what civilisation has accomplished, and it is strong in the degree in which we are haunted by the dreams of nobler possibilities.

Professor Huxley spoke for very many when, in addressing a gathering of younger men at Cambridge, he declared, with his characteristic courage and frankness, that he would be willing to surrender his freedom if only he might be safeguarded from error

and wrong. "I protest," he said, "that if some great Power would agree to make me always think what is true and do what is right, on condition of being turned into a sort of clock and wound up every morning before I get out of bed, I should instantly close with the offer. The only freedom I care about is the freedom to do right ; the freedom to do wrong I am ready to part with on the cheapest terms to anyone who will take it of me."¹

No one, of course, who heard these words imagined that the speaker intended to do more than express in the strongest terms his sense of a sorely felt need. It was not that he seriously supposed the problem would be solved by turning a man into a piece of irresponsible machinery. The passage occurs in a lecture intended to explain that the best science and philosophy do not "talk about there being nothing in the Universe but Matter and Force and Necessary Laws," thus ignoring "some of the deepest and most difficult problems that beset humanity."

The question which men and women in age after age have been driven to ask is this, Is there a Power that can supply what human beings need, a Power by which they can be helped, not mechanically,

¹ *Collected Essays*, I, p. 192.

but as intelligent agents who are morally and spiritually free ?

In the following pages we are to consider once again the provision to meet this demand which has always formed an essential part of the Christian message and programme. We shall go back to the start, and see how this provision was originally interpreted by the earliest Christians. We shall try to express the meaning of their experience in the terms which are most likely to be intelligible to us, and we shall try to arrive at an understanding of the conditions that must be fulfilled if a similar experience is to be possible to-day.

No pains will be spared to make the treatment of the subject as simple and lucid as possible, but readers must not expect that it can be altogether free from difficulty. It will be recognised as we go on that we are dealing with matters about which the wisest have still a great deal to learn. Strange as it may appear, it is only the truth to say that the amount of attention given to this part of the teaching of Christianity has as yet been by no means equal to that which has been devoted to the consideration of the other parts.

If a man had been left a legacy which consisted of a sum in three figures, he would not be satisfied to accept the portion represented by the first or

even by the first and the second. He would want to receive the whole. Ought we not to adopt a like attitude in regard to our inheritance in the Christian faith? Are we not bound, as the Catechism teaches, to believe "all the articles of the Christian faith"? In the case of the legacy each additional figure received has the effect of raising its predecessor to a higher power, so that the second adds considerably to the value of the first, and the third to that of them both. Similarly it is true that those who grasp the contents of the second section of the Creed gain an entirely fresh hold upon the meaning of the first; and there can be no doubt that a real belief in the Person and work of the Holy Spirit would add just that assurance and enrichment to our modern Christianity which, as most of us recognise, it grievously lacks. The subject may not be without its difficulties, but we may be sure that there is no subject we could think of more certain to repay a reverent and serious attention.

CHAPTER I

THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT

WE shall do wisely to begin by making sure that we realise the importance and place which our subject held in the original programme of Christian belief and experience. One result of modern criticism has been to quicken the historical sense, and consequently we find it easier than those before us did to see events in their true perspective. It would be a good exercise to go right through the New Testament and mark all the references to the work of the Holy Spirit. If we have never made such a study, we might be astonished by the number and nature of the statements. We should note how, in the Gospels, our Lord was announced as coming for this very purpose, that He might "baptise with the Spirit":¹ how He wrought His own mighty works in the power of the Spirit;² and how He gradually led His Apostles to the point at which they would themselves be ready to receive the

¹ St. Matthew iii. 11; St. Mark i. 8; St. Luke iii. 16; St. John i. 33.

² St. Luke iv. 14; St. Matthew xii. 28; St. John iii. 34.

wonderful gift. We should find that His utterances as to the Holy Spirit became more and more definite as the close of His ministry drew near.

Among the pathetic things in literature must be reckoned the accounts of leave-takings by revered masters of devoted disciples who sorely bewailed their departure. It is of interest to compare and contrast the narrative in the Gospels with the descriptions which are to be met with elsewhere. When, for example, the founder of Buddhism was bidding his followers farewell, he is reported to have said to them, " You must be your own refuge, your own light " : and when Socrates was about to be taken from his disciples, one of them sorrowfully declared that he was leaving them orphans. The feelings of our Lord's chosen band of associates can have been no less sad when they realised that the leader for whose sake they had given up all was to be removed from their sight, while they were to be left to confront an unfriendly world. If ever men needed encouragement they were the men, and we know that they received it abundantly. A greater than Gautama, or Socrates, made it plain to them that they had nothing to fear. He would not allow them to suppose that they were to be left in a deserted condition. He told them expressly that it would not be so. His promise, " I will not leave you comfort-

less,"¹ would be more literally translated "I will not leave you *orphans*," the word in the Greek being the same as that which had been used by the disciple of Socrates. Our Lord did not say "you must be your own refuge," and "your own light." No indeed,

Our blest Redeemer ere He breathed
His tender, last farewell,
A Guide, a Comforter bequeathed
With us to dwell.

The promised consolation was to be that of a Presence so real that it would more than fill the blank caused by His withdrawal. The disciples were to be the gainers and not losers by the change. They were to discover that it would be "expedient" that He should go away.² Under the new conditions they would make more rapid progress than had ever been possible before. What they had learned already would be seen in new light, and they would be carried on to a knowledge of truth such as had not hitherto been within their comprehension. A power, moreover, would be given them of communicating what they knew to others beyond anything that their previous experience could have suggested.

¹ St. John xiv. 18.

² St. John xvi. 7.

We do not marvel that they were slow to accept the consolation. Nothing short of an actual experience of heightened faculties and increased illumination could make the promise intelligible, and time would have to pass before they would be able to convey to others any clear account of its meaning.

How the Gift was bestowed we learn from the Acts of the Apostles. So overflowing was the endowment that the little company were scarcely able to contain it, or to express in articulate speech the energy which flooded their souls. All who had previously known them perceived that there had come to them a light and a strength, a joy and a certainty such as defied explanation unless it were true, as they declared, that a Power from on high had possessed them.

The psychological phenomena which accompanied the Pentecostal experience were, to say the least of them, out of the common; and attempts have frequently been made to explain them as no more than accretions that gathered round a story of what happened under conditions of excitement which made sober reporting impossible. It may be worth while, therefore, to remark that such phenomena are beginning to wear a look which makes it less difficult than it was a little while ago to recognise

their historical character. Things which might a few years back have been dismissed as outside the bounds of credibility are regarded in our days of psychical science with much greater patience and interest.

But it must not be supposed that in this matter we are dependent upon what may be at any moment the approved scientific explanation of a particular phenomenon. The evidence is written large on the face of history. When we read the accounts in the Acts, and follow with care the corroborative and cumulative witness of the direct assertions and implied assumptions of the Epistles, we are impressed by a tone of confidence, and a sense of unbounded hope, which could only have become habitual in the case of persons who had good reason to know that they were the possessors of inexhaustible spiritual resources upon which they might draw without fail.

If ever the disciples had thought of themselves as men who were about to be deprived of their Head, they had learned that He had in very truth become more really their Head than before. To have clung to Him in the flesh, and to have kept Him by them, would have been as if the limbs of a swimmer had insisted that their head should remain with them under the surface of the water, not knowing

how much better off they would be when their head had been raised to breathe the air above.

The metaphor of the head and the members is, in its Christian application, due to St. Paul. The analogy vividly expressed the attitude and the expectation of the earliest believers. More and more clearly it became manifest to them that their life below depended upon the exaltation of their Master to the higher sphere. They knew also that the vital union between themselves and their Lord was maintained by the indwelling Spirit. Upon the presence of the Spirit depended the growth of the Body and the effectiveness of its several parts. To the working of His mighty power they looked for all spiritual and intellectual, and even physical, renewal.

There can be no question as to the strength and constancy of their belief. Imperfectly instructed persons were to be found who seemed unaware that the Holy Spirit had been given, but for the great majority of believers no fact was more certain. When occupants for the most ordinary offices had to be found, it was accepted as obviously fitting that those only should be appointed who were "full of the Holy Ghost."¹

¹ Acts vi. 3.

To say all this is not to claim that these earliest Christians were all of them saints in the highest and fullest sense. It needs no reading between the lines of the letters addressed to them to perceive that this was far from being the case ; nor is it likely that there were many among them who could have given any carefully reasoned explanation of what they had seen and felt ; but they were all convinced that the Spirit had come, and that undeniable proofs of His influence were apparent within and around.

If any of them had been challenged to say how he could be so confident in face of opposition, so joyous in affliction, so entirely persuaded of the certainty of victory in spite of his own weakness and of the awful force of temptation, we cannot doubt that his answer would have been, " We believe in the Holy Ghost."

In short, the temper and tone of the New Testament are inexplicable unless it is recognised that the Gift which had been promised was known to have been abundantly bestowed.

CHAPTER II

A CHANGE OF EMPHASIS

CREATIVE epochs, especially when they have been times of great spiritual enrichment, are usually, and perhaps necessarily, followed by periods during which the gains can be slowly appropriated and turned into available knowledge. We do well to think and speak with respect of the efforts and experiences of sub-Apostolic Christianity. The more we are able to make a just estimate of the strongly entrenched forces of the old civilisations, the more astonished we are at the rapid advance of the new faith, starting as it did with its numerical inferiority and its lack of what the world would account political and social support. There can be only one sufficient explanation of it all. The conquering courage and joy, the loyalty and fellowship and irresistible purity of life, the contempt of death and the splendour of a hope that reached far beyond the seen and the temporal, can only have sprung from faith in a living Christ, and can only have been sustained by an active reliance upon the ever

present sympathy and powerful direction of His Spirit.

This trust in the Holy Spirit has remained implicit in the thought of the Christian society. Whenever the Church, as a body, has been required to give official expression to its faith, it has spoken with no uncertainty on the matter. A profession of belief in the Divine Spirit has always formed an integral part of its Creed, and has never been absent from its sacramental doctrine and devotional language. But, while this can be said, the truth requires us to acknowledge that no part of the Christian doctrine has been so slowly grasped and appropriated as the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

What has already been said can fairly be urged as some explanation of the slowness of the process. Never in the history of life and thought had there been such an inrush of fresh ideas and new experiences. If ever it could be legitimate to speak of an embarrassment of spiritual riches, the state of those who suddenly found themselves entrusted with the good news of the Gospel may be rightly so described. Only by degrees would they be able to go over it and estimate it and make it their own. The work of assimilation would have to be accomplished in stages, and the pace of the common advance could not be quick. New elements were continually pour-

ing into the Church, bringing notions derived from the paganism that had been professedly abandoned. The instruction of insiders had to be carried on whilst at the same time unceasing demands were made upon the teachers by questions and challenges which came from without. Small wonder if the progress was slow, and if attention had to be concentrated upon the earlier parts of the Creed before continuous thought could be devoted to the contents of its concluding stage.

We can trace the steps as they were taken. First came the struggle with Gnosticism, through which churchmen attained to an understanding of their position in view of the problems which had been raised by speculations as to the creation of matter and the Divine relation to the world. Then followed the long period of controversies over the more specifically Christian doctrines of the Person and Nature of Christ. Hypothesis after hypothesis was put forward. These had to be examined, and specious solutions and unworthy compromises had to be exposed and rejected. Never have keener intellects been brought to bear upon the elucidation of any of the perplexities of thought. To some the subtleties of distinction which were finally arrived at have seemed to be unnecessary refinements, and many have been inclined to denounce as excessive the

ardour which was thrown into the disputes; but deeper insight has always made it plain that the issues involved were momentous, and in the end the old faith in its completeness has been shown to be vastly more intelligible to the reason, and more satisfying to the conscience and heart, than any of the substitutes for it that have ever been proposed.

The debt that we owe to Greek theology for the acumen and zeal with which it applied itself to these intricate questions of Christology should dispose us to think kindly of its failure to go on to the further problems that have to do with the relations and operations of the Holy Spirit. The Creed of Nicæa in its original form attempted no more than the simple avowal—"And we believe in the Holy Ghost." Athanasius himself was most unwilling to deal with any doctrine that did not arise of necessity out of the Arian situation. Only when he had been pressed again and again by his correspondent, the Egyptian Bishop Serapion, could he be induced to write the four letters which contained the substance of what was subsequently accepted by authority and has been maintained ever since.

In the succeeding centuries other disputes arose as to the nature of human responsibility, and the claims of ecclesiastical administration. These occu-

pied the attention and exhausted the energies of the thinkers and leaders of the Church. It is, moreover, a tragical fact that the one further attempt by the united Church to deal with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was the occasion, if not the cause, of the rupture which divided Christendom into its separated portions of East and West.

Such were the influences which made for delay, with the result that, to borrow the words of an able and independent observer of the course of Christian thought, "the traditional doctrine of the Holy Spirit, neglected by the early theologians of the Church, even when the Creeds were still in the formative period of their existence, has remained until this day in the background of inquiry both for the theologians and the philosophers." ¹

But it may be asked, How, if it is true that deep down in the human heart there is an urgently felt need of supernatural help, has it happened that Christian men could be content to allow the belief in the Holy Spirit's presence to remain so generally and for practical purposes in abeyance? Can it be that some other reliance had taken its place, so that a partial good has been accepted in lieu of the best? That is a question which deserves more attention

¹ Prof. Royce, *The Problem of Christianity*, ii., p. 14.

from theologians than it has yet received. Two contributions may be suggested as containing at all events a part of the answer.

There can be no doubt that the Greek mind was inclined to fasten upon the idea of the Word—the *Logos*—as the active principle at work in Creation and in the Incarnation, to the exclusion of every other mode of the Divine activity. It is plain that this tendency might have the effect of diverting men's minds from the work of the Spirit, though the Fourth Gospel is evidence that the two thoughts may, and ought to be, held in harmony together.

In the West another tendency drew away men's thoughts even more effectually from the agency of the Holy Spirit. This was the tendency to interpret "grace" in the sense of an impersonal spiritual influence communicated ministerially by appointed and regular channels. In the New Testament the word "grace" is employed, almost without exception, in the sense of Divine favour freely bestowed. Inasmuch as this favour can never be without beneficial effect, there was a secondary sense in which "grace" implied support and assistance; but the stress which came to be laid on the secondary sense did much to divert attention and expectation from that which is in truth "a higher gift than grace," the presence and the very Self of the Holy Spirit of God, without

whose aid no "means of grace" can convey any blessing of strength.

The tendency thus to interpret the meaning of "grace" can be traced in large measure to the influence of St. Augustine, and its effect has been apparent throughout the whole subsequent history of religious thought. Without some such explanation it is not easy to account for the fewness of the references to the work of the Holy Spirit to be met with in representative writers of the Western Church. It is remarkable, for example, that in the *Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola there should have been no meditation devoted to the subject of the Day of Pentecost, nor, indeed, to the work of the Spirit in the soul of a Christian. So, too, it has been noted as strange that in the sermons which remain of the great French preachers Bossuet and Massillon there should not be one which bears directly upon the Holy Spirit. It must not, however, be thought that the effect of the tendency was confined to teachers who belonged to the Roman obedience. It has been no less marked in the case of those who imagined that they had moved the furthest from the Latin type of theological thinking.

In all branches of the Church individual leaders have striven from time to time, with great earnestness, to recall Christians to a sense of the place which

the Spirit's operation holds in the New Testament ; but more often than not they have been looked upon as devotional enthusiasts, and the general inclination has been to regard their efforts with distrust as likely to lead to extravagance.

It is with no poor desire to find fault with our predecessors that attention has been thus directed to their lack of insistence upon a vital part of Christian teaching and experience. If we dwell upon their failure it is only that we may the better realise what remains to be accomplished, and may gird ourselves for a task which may be intended to be our own. The reasons for supposing this will become more apparent as we proceed.

For the moment it may be enough to recall significant words written nearly seventy years ago by one who has proved himself to have been an unusually trustworthy seer. In a letter of Frederick Denison Maurice there can be seen this remarkable forecast : " I cannot but think that the reformation in our day, which I expect to be more deep and searching than that of the sixteenth century, will turn upon the Spirit's presence and life, as that did upon the Justification by the Son."¹ If this prediction is to be realised, we shall witness events as wonderful as any of which our fathers have told us.

¹ *Life*, i., p. 543.

CHAPTER III

THE PARACLETE

WE have been thinking of the failure on the part of the majority of Christians to give due recognition to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, and we have noted some of the reasons which may be supposed to account for it. Before proceeding, we had better remind ourselves that there have been difficulties very different from those to which allusion has been made. They are difficulties which have arisen not from our side, but, if we may reverently say so, from His—in consequence, that is, of what He is and of His methods. Let us briefly consider what some of these are.

In the first place, there is the difficulty that the Holy Spirit is invisible to our ordinary sense.¹ We cannot discern Him as we might one who was incarnate amongst us. The difficulty is due of necessity to the constitution of His being. “A spirit hath not flesh and bones.” It was, moreover, involved in

¹ St. John xiv. 17.

the nature of His work. He was to render services such as our Lord in the flesh was not able to render. His relations were to be of the most immediate and vital kind, for He was not only to be with the disciples, but to dwell in them. "Spirit with spirit" would meet, "closer than breathing and nearer than hands and feet." Indeed, His presence was to be so intimately nigh that He would be "never so far off as even to be near." The gain was to be great, but it must inevitably follow that our accustomed modes of measurement would be inadequate to discern His influences and to discriminate the manner of His working.

This initial difficulty is yet further increased by reason of other qualities and characteristics that belong to Him and His ways. Our Lord had expressly prepared the disciples for one of these. We can perhaps best describe it by the word "selflessness." The Holy Spirit was not to come in His own Name, nor was He to seek His own glory.¹ In more senses than that originally intended, it was to be true of Him that He would "not speak of Himself."² Our Lord knew the difficulty that this must create. He had said, when speaking of teachers generally, that if one came in his own name he

¹ St. John xiv. 26, xvi. 14.

² St. John xvi. 13.

would meet with a readier acceptance.¹ Men as a rule are more quickly impressed by self-assertion than by self-repression. It is true that as life goes on we do most of us change our opinion, more especially if it has been our privilege to be brought into close contact with a really large soul. Large souls do not try to impose themselves upon us as smaller personalities often do. In their presence we expand, and are made to feel strangely at home. There is, no doubt, a danger lest we should be too free, and should only learn later to take a right measure of their greatness and goodness. The selflessness of the Holy Spirit has made it the more possible for us to be guilty, without deliberately intending it, of lack of attention and due respect in our attitude towards Him.

There is still another characteristic that we must consider. The Holy Spirit is not only invisible and selfless ; His operations are forceless. He does not resort to compulsion, His voice within is gentle, "soft as the breath of even." His influence is mighty when welcomed and yielded to, but it is never overmastering. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."² We ought not to need

¹ St. John v. 43.

² 2 Corinthians iii. 17.

much argument to convince us that the possession of this quality is no sign of any want of strength and wisdom, but rather the reverse.

These are days in which we are revising and even revolutionising many of the old ideas which had shaped our educational methods. The time has certainly gone when the success of a teacher was estimated by his power of enforcing his opinions, and of stamping a particular type of mind and character upon his scholars. It is increasingly recognised that the strongest and wisest educators do not desire to dominate, much less to domineer. On the contrary, they are careful to avoid obtruding their own individualities, and keep as far as possible in the background watching for opportunities of giving guidance and rendering assistance as these arise.

It will be of interest to quote some descriptions of the system in which this revised conception of the teacher's office has found clearest and boldest expression. In the words of one who could speak with authority on the matter, "The main principle of the Montessori method is that the teacher should generally remain in the background." "There must be liberty for the children to expand physically, mentally, and morally." "The teacher ought not to absorb the child's attention, nor attract it too

often. She ought rather to lend herself to the child when the child has need of her." ¹

So again we are assured that "the province of the teacher is suggestion founded on observation." She never lectures and rarely gives an explicit order. She is there to watch the natural growth of each individual child, and to guide it when necessary, chiefly by answering questions.²

Some, no doubt, will say that in this system the educational revolt has been carried too far, and will regard the course thus recommended as quixotic and unpractical, especially where large classes of children have to be dealt with. Most of us would probably agree in thinking that the method could only succeed in the hands of a teacher who was gifted with a rare personality and endowed with exceptional patience.

This is not the place in which to attempt to pass judgment upon the merits of a particular system. Our purpose in referring to it is only that we may use it to illustrate the method employed by the Divine trainer of souls. And for this purpose its value is increased rather than diminished if we have

¹ From an address by Madame Ségalos to London County Council teachers, January, 1913.

² See the series of articles contributed to the *Times* in June, 1914, by a correspondent in Rome.

to acknowledge that the ideal is so high that it can seldom be realised by mortals. When we gather together into a whole the impressions which are made upon us by the New Testament teaching as to the office and ministry of the Holy Spirit, we may be surprised to discover how entirely it accords with the views towards which our more recent experiments in educational science have been leading us.

It looks, moreover, as if a much needed light were to be thrown as the result of these experiments upon a New Testament expression which for long has been a subject of much uncertainty and discussion. We refer to the title used more than once by our Lord to designate the Holy Spirit before His appointed work began.

Many attempts have been made to translate and explain that title. Our authorised and revised versions, following the lead of Wycliffe, have rendered it by the word "Comforter." We have to remember that in old English "to comfort" meant to strengthen, rather than to console. It has rightly been said of the Holy Spirit that, "He did not come to console the disciples for their loss, but mainly to strengthen their hearts and minds by enabling them to understand the whole truth, and to feel the whole force, of the Gospel."¹ The term

¹ Archdeacon Hare, *Mission of the Comforter*, p. 328.

Comforter, beautiful as it is, is not fully adequate, and may be misleading in its modern use.

Among the alternative translations proposed are "advocate," "helper," "monitor," "guardian," and "protector." Each of these suggests some part of the service that the Holy Spirit, as the Lord's representative,¹ was to render to the disciples, but none of them conveys all that is contained in the original expression. Some of the older versions did not attempt any explanation, but reproduced the Greek word in the form of "Paracletus." We are ourselves familiar with this in our slightly modified "Paraclete." Possibly there would have been some advantage had this been more commonly adopted by us, but what is really important is that we should ascertain and lay hold of the primary meaning of the term. Bishop Westcott has assured us that this "can properly mean only 'one called to the side of another,' and that with a secondary notion of counselling or supporting or aiding him."²

¹ The word "another" (St. John xiv. 16) implies that our Lord Himself had previously fulfilled the part. It should also be borne in mind that the title we are considering is used (in 1 St. John ii. 1) to describe His own present action on our behalf.

² *Supplementary Note* on St. John xiv. A suggestive parallel has been found in the first-century Jewish writer Philo, who declared that God when He was creating the world had no need

Must we not say, then, that if we are to think rightly of the Holy Spirit we ought to conceive of Him as unseen but never far away, as untouched by the egotism that mars so much that we ourselves attempt to do, as infinitely gentle and gracious, and as holding Himself always available and at our service whenever we ask for His help in counsel or action ?

If it is true, as it certainly is, that these characteristics and qualities do make it hard for us to realise His nearness and to distinguish His operations, it can also be said with confidence that, when we learn to understand His aims and His methods, our reverence and gratitude are sure to be most completely won. Some of us have had experience of teachers whom at first we could but imperfectly appreciate, and for whom later on we came to feel a boundless respect and affection. When we did realise the worth of their influence we felt that we owed to it no small part of our very selves. Can we hope for anything more than that such a relationship should exist between us and Him of whom we have been thinking and speaking all too imperfectly ?

Once again let it be said that our knowledge of Christianity will remain seriously imperfect until

of a *Paracletos* (*De mund. opif.* VI). It is clear that in this passage the rendering "comforter" would not be admissible.

it has come to include a sense of this further truth. Life is, beyond doubt, unspeakably enriched for those who have learned to know "the *grace* of the Lord Jesus Christ," and thereby to understand something of the greatness of "the *love* of God;" but we do not enter upon the highest stage of our spiritual education until we have at least begun to realise what is meant by "the *communion*," the fellowship, let us dare to say it, the friendship of "the Holy Ghost" (2 Cor. xiii. 14).

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY

WE must now turn our thoughts in another direction and try to form an estimate of the influence likely to be exerted by certain facts which have been brought to light, and by an hypothesis which is in process of being built upon them. Even if the claims now advanced should prove to be exaggerated, few who know anything of the matter can doubt that a fresh line of inquiry has been opened, and that account will have to be taken of it by all who desire in the future to do justice to the old problems of mental and spiritual life.

The history of the investigation is interesting. The result attained was a by-product of labours which had other designs in view. Here in England the work originated with the Society for Psychical Research. For some years this body, which was founded in 1882, was not regarded very seriously by the orthodox exponents of science. Its business was more or less privately to collect and sift evidence relating to spiritualism, and to ghostly apparitions.

tions, in the hope of discovering what lay behind it and of reducing it to some sort of order. This, the original purpose, has been rewarded by a fair measure of success, but in the course of the search more important discoveries have been made. A strict examination into the phenomena of hypnotism, clairvoyance, clairsaudience, and suggestion, with the accompanying conditions of abnormal apprehension, the heightening of ordinary powers, and the sometimes alarming evidence of what looks like a disintegration of personality, has gradually disclosed what may prove to be new reaches and vistas of the mind and soul.

The name most prominently associated with this investigation is that of F. W. H. Myers, who died in 1901, leaving an elaborate work in two volumes, entitled *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, in which he had set forth a mass of the evidence with such conclusions as he thought this would justify. The following was his own account of that which would generally be regarded as the most novel and valuable of these conclusions.

“The conscious self of each of us as we call it—the empirical, the supra-liminal self as I should prefer to say—does not comprise the whole of the consciousness or of the faculty within us. There exists a more comprehensive consciousness and a

profounder faculty, which for the most part remains potential only, so far as regards the life on earth, but from which the consciousness and the faculty of earth-life are mere selections, and which reasserts itself in its plenitude after the liberating change of death. . . . I find it permissible and convenient to speak of sub-liminal selves, or more briefly of a sub-liminal self. . . . I conceive that no self of which we can have cognizance is in reality more than a fragment of a larger self, revealed in a fashion at once shifting and limited, through an organism not so framed as to afford it full manifestation.”¹

Professor William James did not hesitate to speak of this “discovery that, in certain subjects at least, there is not only the consciousness of the ordinary field, with its usual centre and margin, but an addition thereto in the shape of a set of memories, thoughts, and feelings which are extra-marginal and outside of the primary consciousness altogether, but yet able to reveal their presence by unmistakable signs,” as “the most important step forward that has occurred in psychology” since he had been a student of the science. It had, he said, “revealed to us an entirely unsuspected peculiarity in the constitution of human nature.”²

¹ *Op. cit.*, I, pp. 13-15.

² *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 283.

According to the new theory, human personality, as it has developed, has become differentiated into two phases. One of them is the self known to the ordinary consciousness which it is easiest for us to observe in action, and which has been evolved mainly to correspond with our material environment. The other is a deeper capacity or faculty of semi-consciousness, and even of unconsciousness, which lies below the threshold of the familiar waking life and thought. This is a storehouse into which is accumulated all that has ever passed through the avenues of sense. What is thus stored abides and, although it may not always be recoverable at will, is never lost. Moreover, the sub-conscious mind is a workshop in which new combinations are effected and new products are fashioned, almost as if they had been subjected to a chemical change. Through the subconscious mind the soul is kept in touch with the spiritual region, from which messages can be received, and out of which can be drawn the succours and forces that account for exceptional activities, as, for example, those of genius, which Mr. Myers defined to be "a capacity for utilising forces that lie too deep for the ordinary man's control." ¹

¹ *Human Personality*, II, p. 302.

It is in this direction that we are bidden to look for the explanation of much that is puzzling in connexion with mind-healing, faith cures, and kindred phenomena. Already a change can be observed in the attitude adopted by the scientific mind towards these experiences.¹

If it is inevitable that the announcement of these new discoveries should create a stir amongst philosophers, scientific professors, and medical practitioners, it is equally certain that they will have far-reaching effects upon the studies and practice of our theologians and spiritual guides. A considerable literature has begun to appear in which it is claimed that conscience and character, "the inner man," and all the deepest religious experiences, have their origin in the subconscious mind. One distinguished Biblical critic has been bold enough to say, "I cannot but think it a clear gain if we firmly grasp the fact that the work of the Holy Spirit, the true and proper work, does belong to this sphere." ■

The movement is gaining adherents rapidly, and it has become necessary to say that in following

¹ See Professor William James's remarks on the newer views of "Miraculous Healings" and "Hystero-demonopathy" in *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 501.

² Dr. Sanday, *Christologies Ancient and Modern*, p. 156.

the new guidance we are bound to proceed with caution, and that for reasons which can be easily stated.

In its initial stage the new hypothesis has of necessity had to be clothed in forms of language which have been borrowed from other departments of knowledge. Psychical science is obliged to do the best it can with the old terms of physical measurement and description. It must be borne in mind that the metaphor of a *limen*, or "threshold," is only a metaphor; and that the words *supra* and *sub*, "above" and "below" (or perhaps we ought to say "at"), must not be pressed in a literal sense as though they referred to spheres and localities that could be mapped out and defined.

Again, it was natural that the leaders in the work of investigation should make a beginning in the region of the abnormal and pathological. A firmer basis will be found for the new teaching if it can be shewn that it is equally applicable to what are happily the more familiar conditions of ordinary health.

Then also there is the obvious danger of rushing from one extreme to another. If we have been too blind to the deeper and more mysterious parts of our being, we shall fall into a fatal error if we allow ourselves to be so entirely occupied with these that

we neglect or disparage the conscious intellect. While we should welcome whatever fresh light can be shed upon the beginnings of all we are, and think, and do, we dare not forget that our power of apprehending and using our knowledge, of preserving our sense of personal identity, and indeed of maintaining our sanity, depends upon the degree in which we keep a just balance between the development of our intuitive sense and our logical faculty.

But, when all the needed reservations have been made, enough will remain to give us material for very serious reflection, and the time seems to have arrived when it has become a duty to consider in what directions the new psychology may possibly take us.

All that can be attempted here is to indicate some points which have an immediate bearing upon our present subject.

CHAPTER V

THE WORLD WITHIN

It is too soon to speak with any certainty of the changes which the new psychology will make in our methods of thinking and teaching, but it does not seem premature to indicate certain effects as likely to be produced.

In the first place, we may take it for granted that there will be an altered estimate of the value which is to be attached to the intuitional and emotional elements in the development of life and character.

We have always been aware that there are powerful instincts in human nature, and depths of emotion from which activities might be expected to burst forth at any moment with almost irresistible force, but for the most part these elements were regarded with distrust as incalculable and dangerous. The wise man was supposed to be he who was the least swayed and influenced by them, who held them severely in check and refused to allow his judgment to be affected by considerations that were not logically sound. There were always,

of course, those who protested against this view of the emotions as too narrow and not sufficiently human, and they could point to instances in which strength and wisdom and nobility were undoubtedly derived from hidden sources of ardour and enthusiasm; but these examples, if they were admitted, were held to be the exceptions that only proved the rule.

Now, under the sanction of psychological science, we are encouraged to take a much more respectful interest in what is called the "feeling-background," and a personality is judged to be rich in the degree in which it possesses wells and springs, or even has at its command floods, of emotion; and, inasmuch as the religious temperament is especially rich in this respect, it is regarded as holding a place in the mid stream of vital evolution. "Conversion" is accepted as a signal example of the way in which a life can be transformed by the eruption of deeper forces that break forth in response to appeals which awaken love and devotion. It is no longer thought to be a sign of feebleness or fanaticism when a soul is prostrated by penitence or overjoyed by delight, even when these feelings rise too high for words, or "lie too deep for tears."

And it is plain, also, that we shall not be content to look to the subconscious region for the source

of our feelings only. From this quarter are derived, we are told, the materials which furnish the contents and determine the intensity of our thoughts.

We are all of us aware of the way in which what we are accustomed to call "first impressions" are rapidly and, as it often proves, correctly formed, and in which decisions and judgments are arrived at apart from the ordinary processes of deliberation and argument. Careful experiments have made it seem probable that the subconscious within us receives impressions and intimations which are then transmitted to the intellect, by means of which they find expression as intelligible thoughts.

Many years ago a phrase was coined which has now passed into general circulation, and is recognised as a valuable contribution to the vocabulary of mental science. It was the phrase "unconscious cerebration."¹ By this it was intended to denote that the brain is capable of activities which take place, as we say, "at the back of the mind," and surprise us when they announce their results mysteriously full-grown and complete. It is, for example, a not uncommon experience to discover on waking in

¹ First used by Dr. W. B. Carpenter about the year 1853.

the morning that light seems to come, as we say, "in a flash" upon some matter that had greatly perplexed us. It may even be that a finished logical explanation of a difficult problem has presented itself before the eye of the mind. In some persons these powers are more strongly developed than in others, and no doubt they would grow if they were believed in and cultivated. We should now attribute such results to what had been happening in the regions of subconsciousness. There is reason to think that these subjective impressions may lead to mental visions which take outward form and shape, and that such inspirations when they pass into consciousness may do so with all the force and distinctness of words that are actually spoken and heard.

It is not difficult to believe that we may have a good deal to learn from experiences of this kind in regard to the communications which have come to those who were spiritually capable of receiving them from a higher sphere. Nor can we doubt that there are lessons awaiting us all which may be of great value in guiding us to the most profitable use of our faculties and powers.

Psychologists lay great stress to-day upon the need of continuous and concentrated attention.

It is this, they say, that makes the difference between the mental and spiritual efficiency of one person and another. For most of us nothing is harder than to "fix our thoughts," but, if we are to make the most of our capacities, we must learn to listen to the monitions and intimations from within, and we must do this not only by making deliberate and repeated efforts, but by maintaining an attitude of "wise passiveness," in the confidence that something "of itself will come," if only we are ready and waiting to receive it.

We cannot be trained to this power of attention in a moment. "The difficulty is to read the full significance of these messages from below. There are all degrees of directness and clearness. Sometimes the message can hardly be deciphered at all; the needle seems to play aimlessly backwards and forwards; the most that can be made out is the single fact that there is a message. At other times we are left in no doubt that the message has a meaning, and in part the meaning is sufficiently plain, while in part it is so wrapped up in symbol and metaphor that as a whole we are baffled by it. But again, at times the ear is so attuned to the message, the listener is so endowed with a special gift, that what is obscure to others is revealed to him. To such gifted individuals in their moments of

clairvoyance God seems to speak, 'face to face as a man speaketh with his friend.' " ¹

There is another point to which reference must be made. So far we have been thinking of how a clearer insight into the workings of the subconscious mind might enable us to employ our faculties with better effect ; but it will not do to assume that the new teaching has only what is encouraging to tell us, nor will it do to imagine that all that is needed is a determination on our part to brace ourselves to vigorous efforts in order that we may attain to the fullest power and clearest vision.

If the first glimpse of the new world that has opened within fills us with wonder and hope, a further view of it may equally well fill us with anxiety and dismay. After all, this inner world is likely to prove itself a very mixed affair. There is no reason to suppose that it is not a source from which come temptations and ill suggestions, as well as noble motives and holy inspirations. " The subliminal self is made up of elements good, bad, and indifferent, and it is unthinkable that the ordinary man should have power to utilise at will the good elements and to 'bottle up the lower ones.' " ²

The value of such a warning is great, and it has a

¹ Dr. Sanday, *Christologies Ancient and Modern*, p. 158.

² K. J. Sanders, *Adventures of the Christian Soul*, p. 141.

special bearing upon the matter which we are considering. There have been those who have hinted that we shall have less need to invoke supernatural aid, now that so much which once appeared unaccountable is to be explained as the product of sub-liminal activities ; but a fuller acquaintance with the facts is likely to shew the superficiality of this hasty deduction.

The hidden region of the soul is a vast laboratory in which all sorts of elements are gathered and compounded. It is there that the motives originate which determine the character and direction of our unruly wills and sinful passions, as well as of our good counsels and holy desires. If there were no wise and sympathetic Director in whom we can trust, to whom we can flee for aid, then we should be in evil case and might well be driven to despair.

Old words may become strangely new to us when it is found that they have anticipated the outcome of our most recent thinking. Possibly we have yet to interpret the full meaning of the old parable of the Guest on the threshold. It is certain that if we wish to describe the coming into human consciousness of the great Power by which it can be enriched and ennobled, we can find no language more thoroughly in harmony with our most modern conceptions than that which long ago represented

the sacred Visitor as saying, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."

It may well be that one of the most valuable results of our latest psychological inquiries will be to give fresh strength to the conviction that "the need for an adequate *socius*, or companion, is the permanent root of religion."

CHAPTER VI

THE PRINCIPLE OF SHARING

OUR purpose in these chapters is to fix attention upon the gift of the Holy Spirit, and upon the conditions under which that gift can be received and appropriated. To some of these conditions reference has already been made, and there are others about which we have yet to think. Among these there is one to which a prominent place must be assigned, because little progress is likely to be made until it has been clearly recognised and in some real measure complied with. Happily, there are signs to show that we are more alive than we were to its meaning and necessity.

What the condition is, and how far from arbitrary it is, will be best understood if we try to state plainly the principle upon which it depends. The principle is this, that *things have to be shared before they can be fully possessed*. The truth of this is by no means obvious, and we are as a rule very slow to believe it.

When we watch little children at play, we may now and again see an instance in which a child evidently likes to give away his toys and distribute his treasures, but generally it is not so. The instinctive feeling seems to be a desire to get and to accumulate eagerly and jealously. The will to keep strengthens as the years go by until it comes to be taken for granted that those who can obtain and retain the most are to be accounted successful and enviable. Competition is assumed to be an inevitable law of the social order, and not the least important of the duties of government is supposed to be that of protecting the rights of ownership and the sacredness of private property.

Let us freely admit that there is much in all this about which it is necessary to think and speak with some caution. We dare not assert that an instinct that is deeply implanted in nature can be entirely without its uses. We see plainly that competition does develop certain faculties and can promote some kinds of excellence, in spite of the fact that it is the fruitful cause of rivalries and conflicts, and disappointment and distress. We may hesitate to denounce competition as an unmitigated evil, and we may find it hard to imagine that it will ever cease to be present in the life of this world, but none the less we can agree with all our hearts that there is a

more excellent way, and we can rejoice to hear it recommended and to see it tried.

We all of us know that there is something better than the struggle of each for himself alone. We quickly discover that our happiest days are our unselfish days ; and recent experiences have helped multitudes to see that life is best worth living when it is devoted to a noble cause and spent in the service of others. It is in the degree in which we are least mindful of our own interests that we are made most aware of the heightening of our powers, and there are few who would deny that those are really the best off who are the most capable of contributing to the common good.

Would that we could believe that the value to each of anything that is really worth having is increased and not diminished in proportion to the number of those who can enjoy it ! Great would be the change that would then be effected in the aims and ambitions of ordinary life. Already a new thought is working like leaven in the midst of our social confusion. Our very success in the emancipation of the individual has made us aware of the need of that which is larger and freer. It is " more life and fuller that we want." For long we have known that " union is strength," we are now beginning to suspect that this is but half the truth. The better

day will dawn when we realise that "unity is life," that we can not only do more, but *be* more together. Then we shall marvel how we can ever have supposed that any part of the social whole could be healthy and happy while other parts were overlooked and uncared for, and allowed to remain in destitution, or ignorance, or disease. Certainly the truest hope for any development of civilisation in the near future depends upon the voluntary recognition and application of the principle that things must be shared in order that they may be fully possessed.

And, if this is true where material well-being is principally concerned, we ought not to find it difficult to see that it must be true, and even more demonstrably true, in regard to the higher and spiritual good. A new day will dawn for the Church, as well as for the world, whenever that fact is generally perceived and loyally welcomed. Alas, that we are obliged to admit that the progress in this direction amongst us is lamentably small. We can scarcely exaggerate the lengths to which individualism and the passion for private ownership have been carried in the sphere of religion; and, strange to tell, the best people have often been the worst in this respect. They have thought it quite natural and right to aim at getting all the good they could for themselves and by themselves,

and they have urged this aim as a duty upon others.

In this place we must concentrate our attention upon the good of which we are specially thinking—the gift of the Spirit of God. We must try to make it plain that we are certain to be gainers or losers in our search after this most vital of all possessions according as we do or do not lay to heart the principle which we are endeavouring to elucidate. It may be simplest to illustrate the point by reference to a particular instance.

On the wall of the south aisle of St. Patrick's Cathedral, in Dublin, there is a remarkably interesting monument. It was erected some years ago to the memory of an English clergyman. He had served under Wellington in the Peninsular War, and at its close, like many another, he took Holy Orders and became a devoted minister of the Church of Christ. Deeply impressed by the widespread need for a revival of religion, and realising what was the source from which alone this could come, he circulated a prayer and did his utmost to get it used. The words of the prayer are there, carved upon the stone. They are these : " O God, for Christ's sake, give me Thy Holy Spirit."

None of us would willingly criticise a good man's prayer, and all we need say of this one is that it was

so admirable that a very slight change would have made it all that could be desired. If a single word had been altered, the prayer would have been more scriptural and more availing. If any of us has a doubt as to what the alteration should be, let him ask himself how often the word "me" is to be found in the Lord's Prayer. If only the petition had been, "O God, for Christ's sake, give *us* Thy Holy Spirit," it would have fulfilled the condition which Scripture lays down as essential to the reception of the gift in its fulness.

The marvel is that, with the New Testament before us, we can ever have been blind to its teaching in this matter. Was it not a main purpose of our Lord's education of His disciples to prepare them for the coming of the Holy Spirit? And was it not with this end in view that He trained them so patiently to think and work together, and to be at one amongst themselves? Did He not always say, "Ye shall receive"? and did He not forbid them to separate until the promise had been fulfilled? They understood the condition well, with the result that, "when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all of one accord in one place," waiting and ready to be endued with the Power from on high.

The witness of the Epistles is as unmistakable

as is that of the Gospels and the Acts. According to the Apostolic teaching the Holy Spirit is indeed possessed by individuals, but it is only as these are members of the Body. Indeed, it is not too bold a thing to say that we may search the New Testament through, and not find such a prayer as "Give me Thy Holy Spirit." The Spirit is the Holy *Esprit de Corps*, the Gift to the Body, to be possessed in its fulness by those who share it in common.

Let us think of some of the gains that would sooner or later follow from a courageous acceptance of this principle. Without question, an immense impulse would be given to our sense of the duty and privilege of Public Worship. The old language of the Psalter would once more awaken an echo in our hearts—"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord; for thither the tribes go up to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord." It would no longer be imagined that we can achieve in solitude what we may hope for when we "assemble and meet together" for common praise and prayer. "It is then we feel the fulness of the grace for which we pray."

And we should not be satisfied with the gatherings for united devotion. We should want to revive the Church meeting for fellowship and conference.

What light might not be expected upon our bewildering problems—moral, social, and ecclesiastical—if all the gifts of men and women in all classes could be brought to their discussion and consideration in conscious dependence upon the help of the Holy Spirit? How such gatherings might kindle ardour and inflame enthusiasm for all kinds of service and sacrifice! Powers that had been latent would begin to manifest themselves, and a new sense of value and responsibility would arise, as it was realised that it takes all sorts to make a Church. Once again we might have the rich man rejoicing to be brought low while his brother in fustian made a contribution of experience and insight such as is only possible in the case of those who have won a first-hand knowledge of the hard actualities of the struggle of life.

And, again, what fresh strength would be given to efforts and desires for Christian reunion! It is, of course, vain to imagine that the chasms of history can be bridged in a day. Much hard and patient thinking will be needed, as well as breadth of sympathy and warmth of heart. But what is most of all required is a motive strong enough to enable us to face difficulties with the determination to surmount them, and that motive will be supplied when we all see that unity is to be sought, not merely as a

matter of practical politics, and not chiefly for the sake of greater efficiency in work, but because it is the essential condition of that fullest life and clearest vision which can only be the result of the presence and companionship of the Holy Spirit.

To some these things will appear but the imaginings of a dream, although doubtless we all expect them to be the realities of Heaven. There are others who do not despair of seeing something like the beginnings of a fulfilment of them here on the earth. They are convinced that we can none of us imagine anything half so wonderful as that which the Divine goodness is waiting to give, and they are certain that the blessing of Pentecost is still to be bestowed upon those who will agree to claim and receive it together.

CHAPTER VII

INDIVIDUALITY

WE cannot settle it too firmly in our minds that Christian privileges and endowments belong to us, and must be claimed by us in common, as members of the Body of which Christ is the Head. It is only together that we can do our utmost and hope to be our best.

But to assert this as the teaching of Christianity is not to say that in that teaching there is any lack of stress upon the value and vital importance of the individual. On the contrary, the sense of this value and importance had never been so great until Christ appeared ; and, paradoxical as it may seem at first hearing, the feeling when it came was, as it always will be, the direct outcome of a right understanding of the corporate ideal. Let us consider the grounds upon which these statements can be so confidently made.

In the first place, it must be remembered that it was Christianity which originally gave to the world the conviction of the infinite worth of each and

every human soul. During the primitive stages of the world's development, the claims of the tribe and family had been paramount, and no separate rights were allowed to their individual members. This was, speaking generally, the standpoint of the Old Testament. The direst penalty that could befall an Israelite was to be "cut off from Israel." Punishments dealt out to households, and imprecations upon enemies, could not have meant in the old time what they would have been taken to mean when personal rights had received a more definite recognition. The process was a slow one, for "even when we reach the climax of civilisation in Greece and Rome, there is no adequate sense either in theory or practice of human personality as such." "The advent of Christ created a new epoch in the development and recognition of human personality. This is a point of history which admits of no denial."¹

As to the greatness of the change when it came there can be no doubt. If we read the New Testament with care, we must see how immense is the value which is attached to every individual soul. The Heavenly Father, as revealed by our Lord, cares for each, and rejoices like a good shepherd when one missing sheep has been found. Never had there

¹ Dr. Illingworth, *Personality Human and Divine*, chap. i.

been such reverent and tender concern for individual personality and its development as that which was invariably shown by our Lord. It has been strikingly said that His favourite words would seem to have been the "last," the "least," and the "lost." His interest and patience and hopefulness were unfailing, and there is not one of all His followers who is not entitled to say, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me."

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to give effect to the mind of Christ, and we shall not understand that work unless we realise to how large an extent it is occupied with the training and perfecting of personality. This point has been dwelt upon already, when we were considering the office of the Paraclete. It may be enough, by way of further illustration, to recall the startling contrast presented in the Gospels when they describe the result of the very different working and influence of the evil spirit. It is surely significant that the unhappy victim of evil, when asked for his name, could only reply by calling himself "legion." His consciousness of individuality had been lost in the bewilderment of a horrid confusion. While the evil spirit disintegrates and destroys personality, possession by the good Spirit brings salvation and recollectedness and peace. As to the emphasis laid by

Christianity upon the worth of the individual, there can be no sort of uncertainty or question.

But what of the further assertion that this heightened appreciation of individual value was, and always must be, the outcome of a true understanding of the corporate ideal? To many it would be a great relief and satisfaction if this could be proved to be true, for they are haunted by a misgiving lest an increased insistence upon the common life should lead to some weakening of the sense of personal responsibility, and of the power of self-realisation.

The first thing to note is that in the New Testament the two aspects are to be found together, and this not only without a hint of contradiction or disagreement, but on the evident assumption that each is dependent upon the other. Learners who passed into the school of Christ from the preparatory instruction of the Old Testament were not asked to abandon what they had previously been taught, but were called to enter upon the fulness of its meaning.

And it is not enough to say that the new teaching could be held in combination with the old. It actually grew out of the old. If we study closely the words and example of Christ, we shall see that the emphasis which He laid upon personal values was directly due to His recognition of a larger relation-

ship. For Him the lost sheep was indispensable to the completeness of the flock. He made it plain that the prodigal was to be welcomed back as a son of the house ; and in His view the fruitfulness of the branch was entirely dependent upon its remaining in its place as a part of the vine.

This teaching of our Lord prepared the way for the Pauline doctrine of the Body and the members. It is a commonplace to say of St. Paul that he was equally the champion of individual right and the upholder of the corporate ideal. What is not always perceived is that he was the one just because he was the other. We have only to think of the meaning of his great metaphor of the Body to see how inevitably this must follow. If individuals could be turned out with mechanical uniformity like nine-pins from a lathe, then the value of each would be diminished as their number was multiplied, inasmuch as the place of anyone could quite easily be supplied by another. That is what makes the doctrine of rigid equality such a dismal affair. It is a different matter where members of a body are concerned. Then there can be no thought of an interchange. Each is uniquely important, because each has a distinctive function to discharge. All are needed, and all are honourable. The seemingly weakest may call for the greatest consideration.

When St. Paul declared that it was his aim to "present every man *perfect* in Christ,"¹ he used a term which was intended to suggest completeness of development according to the type in each particular instance. He had no thought that the individual parts would exactly resemble one another. Indeed it was their very unlikeness that would fit them to fill their places in the ultimate completeness of "the perfect (R.V. full-grown) man."²

We need have no fear, then, lest the longing for corporate unity should distract our attention and interest from the importance and necessity of personal development. Neither aim can be attained without the other. In the words of one who was rightly esteemed a master of this subject, "as each individual person can only realise himself in the society of others, so the latent possibility of that society can only be realised in the total aggregate of its members ; when everyone, that is to say, has fulfilled his part, performed his particular function, rendered his unique service, made his 'peculiar difference' felt, and so in realising himself assisted the realisation of the social whole."³

While therefore it is true that the notion that

¹ Colossians i. 28.

² Ephesians iv. 13.

³ Dr. Illingworth, *The Christian Character*, viii.

each individual is to be regarded and treated as an isolated and independent whole must vanish before a fuller understanding of the ideals of corporate living, it is no less true that, until this notion does vanish, we shall not know the possibilities of membership, nor the joy of discovering capacities in ourselves and in others which will only be unfolded in fellowship.

In short, it will be only as we are delivered from individualism that we can hope to attain to a healthy and vigorous individuality.

NOTE

To those who are convinced that a revival of the recognition of the reality of corporate life is the one hope, not only of Christian unity but of a true appreciation of the value of differences within that unity, it has been most encouraging to mark the growth of this recognition in quarters which had seemed the least favourable to it. It is now some years since Dr. Dale, an acknowledged Nonconformist leader, gave it as his matured conviction that "individualism involves a suppression of half the duties, and a surrender of half the blessedness of Christian life." (*The Evangelical Revival*, p. 33.)

A like acknowledgment is being made to-day with an earnestness and understanding that augur well for the future. In a volume just published Dr. Forsyth, the able Principal of Hackney College, repeats such state-

ments as these with deliberate insistence. "The Free Churches have been much too atomist. The independence of each congregation or each member has been overdone." "It is the vast personality of the Church that wins its battle." "Each single Church is entitled to no more independence in the great Church than each individual man has in the small, where they are all members one of another." "A club is not a Church." "The Church is not differentiated from all other societies as these are distinct from each other—by its tradition or its purpose, but by its creative Gospel and indwelling Holy Spirit. It is a body with a personality that they have not; first, because it was created by an act of Redemption into which the whole perfect and final personality of its Creator was put; and, second, because it not only wears His stamp but it is inhabited by His personal Holy Spirit, which, and no mere genius, is its life principle." "We have in loyalty to truth, scholarly and historic, to recognise the strong position that sacramentarianism has in the Bible." (*The Church and the Sacraments*, pp. 5, 6, 27, 29, 252.) When this sort of language comes to be accepted by us all, consequences will begin to follow which only a few years ago would have been unthinkable.

CHAPTER VIII

HOW TO OBTAIN

It is not possible to claim that the general thought and experience of professing Christians since the Apostolic age have been maintained at the first level of those to whom the presence and power of the Spirit was the greatest reality and joy of their lives ; but, while this must be said, we should convey a very false impression if it seemed to be implied that there has been any lack of a continuous succession of witnesses through whom the Holy Spirit has been able to manifest what He would willingly have done for all. There have been more of these than any could number.

We may have been privileged to know some of them—men like the Brothers of St. Vincent de Paul, of whom it could be said, “ They are so full of God that you can see it in their faces ” ; or like our own Bishop Wilkinson, of whom the North-country schoolmaster confessed, “ You have only to shake that man’s hand to feel that he is full of the Holy Ghost ” ; or again, like the good priest who died

young in his country parish, and of whom one of the villagers declared, "I never saw him cross the common yonder without being the better for it." Thank God there has been an unbroken line of these witnesses all through the ages; men and women, clergy and lay folk, of all classes and all social conditions. Our hope is that we may see them greatly multiplied in the days to come. The result would soon appear in a new attitude towards Christianity both at home and abroad.

It is to such lives that we naturally turn for the information which no theorising by itself can satisfactorily supply. These men and women may, or may not, be able to explain to us all that we could wish to know of the mystery of their deeper experiences; but they can at all events tell us some things which we may be most thankful to learn. There are two practical matters about which we should more especially value the instruction and advice of those who can speak with the unrivalled authority of a first-hand experience. We should like to be told how we are to set about to obtain the fuller consciousness of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, and what exactly would be the change that we might expect to be produced in our lives if we should succeed in the quest.

It may seem overbold to attempt to say what the

replies to these questions would be likely to be, and yet there are some things about which those whom we may describe as spiritual experts would almost certainly be agreed.

Let us begin with our first question—How are we to set about to obtain a fuller consciousness of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit? In answer we should assuredly be told before all else, *You must pray.*

The advice is familiar; but if we are wise we shall ponder it none the less carefully on that account. When we do so, we shall be faced by the old difficulty which has been a frequent stumbling-block to thoughtful and reverent minds. Why, if God is all good and wise and powerful and must know infinitely better than we do what we really need, why should we have to besiege Him with our poor petitions and not rather wait and take with submission whatever He pleases to give? In dealing with that difficulty most good Christians have been content to appeal to the teaching and example of Christ. He it was who taught us how willing the Heavenly Father is to give, and how fully He understands what things we have need of before we can ask Him; but this did not prevent His urging with the strongest possible insistence the duty and neces-

sity of prayer, and He specially urged it in regard to the best of all good gifts—the gift of the Holy Spirit.¹

If it be asked whether our Lord has offered us any light upon the speculative difficulty, we may suggest that there is one passage in the record of His teaching from which an illuminating hint can be gathered. The eleventh chapter of St. Luke's Gospel contains His answer to the request of the disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray." In response to that request our Lord gave them the pattern of all prayer, and then the parable on prayer, leading them up to this as its lesson—"If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

It is significant that these words should have been followed in the record of the Evangelist by a discussion as to the methods employed by the spirit of evil, and a description of the very different terms upon which the souls of men are made the subjects of its power. The evil spirit is bold and intrusive. It does not wait to be asked for, nor does it say, "by your leave." It comes but to kill and destroy, and cares not what injury its violence may inflict

¹ Compare St. Matthew vii. 11 and St. Luke xi. 13.

upon the delicate constitution of the soul. If driven off, it watches its opportunity and returns with added force to overpower and ruin its victim. While the good is a gift that must be sought, the evil does not wait to be invited.

Here we have what is, perhaps, the nearest approach that the New Testament gives us to a suggestion for the construction of a philosophy of prayer. God always deals with us on the voluntary principle. Our wills are ours, and it is for us to make them His. He does not force good gifts upon us, least of all the gift of Himself. Prayer is a necessary compliance with the law of His order of freedom. We must desire His presence if we are to obtain the knowledge of it, and we must shew Him that we do. When He withholds the gift, it is in order that our longing may be increased, and that He may be enabled to give us the more. So from the beginning it has ever been the case that outpourings of the Holy Spirit have been preceded by prayer, long and continuous prayer.

Here we must once again repeat what has been said in a former chapter. If the good has to be sought, it is not less true that the good must be shared. It is together that we can with confidence look for the answer to our prayers. For this reason we may be thankful that attention is being directed

amongst us to the value of united gatherings for what is called "The Prayer of Silence." For long the members of the Society of Friends have borne nobly persistent testimony to the gains of such united waiting upon the Spirit of God; and, in the light of the new researches into the workings of the subconscious, many are now turning with a fresh understanding and expectancy to services of this kind. That there are laws both of mind and of body which have to be accepted and obeyed before such a "Practice of the Presence of God" can bear its appropriate fruit, will not surprise those who realise that any advance in the knowledge of the spiritual order demands from us our very best thought and most earnest endeavour.¹

There is no work more exhausting than effective prayer, but no effort that we can make is more amply rewarded. Would that we could realise that even a little more prayer would make a great difference to the well-being of the community, and to the utility and happiness of innumerable lives!

To this counsel of prayer must be joined another which is scarcely less important. Those who have

¹ Those who desire further information as to the method and its principles may be referred to *The Fellowship of Silence*, and *The Fruits of Silence*, by Canon Cyril Hephner.

the best right to speak have always insisted upon it. They have said, *You must be humble*. The reason should not be hard to understand, however hard we may find it to fulfil the requirement. In grace, as in nature, power follows the line of least resistance. Hence it is that "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." No obstacle is so fatal to spiritual progress and efficiency as pride, because pride can render it impossible for God to bless us without doing us injury. Only the humble can safely be filled with good, or be trusted to dispense it. "A man," it has been finely said, "may do a great deal of good, if he does not care who gets the credit for it." But so long as we are chiefly concerned for our reputations, and are eager to be commended for our qualities, it is not possible that we can be used as instruments and channels of the heavenly influences. Only in so far as we are emptied of self can we hope to be filled with God.

There is a striking passage in one of Mr. Ruskin's books, in which he stated his belief that "the first test of a truly great man is his humility." He illustrated the statement by examples of artists and thinkers, and then gave what he held to be the explanation. "They have a curious under-sense of powerlessness, feeling that the greatness is not in them, but through them; that they could not do

or be anything else than God made them ; and they see something divine and God-made in every other man they meet." ¹

This testimony from the experience of artists and thinkers only confirms the unvarying witness of the saints. When a successful missionary was asked how he could have achieved the wonders he had accomplished, he modestly answered that he sometimes thought God must have looked out for someone weak enough to do the work, and that at last when He had found him He had said, " This man is weak enough, he will do." That, after all, was only the reaffirmation and confirmation of the great secret of St. Paul—" Most gladly will I glory in my weaknesses . . . for when I am weak, then am I strong." ²

There is a level, doubtless, to which self-confidence and even self-advertisement can lift a man ; but it falls far short of the highest, and the satisfaction that is gained by its attainment is not of a kind that can last. It is when men and women have learned to forget self, in dependence upon God and devotion to others, that a Power can proceed from them which is not to be accounted for by their own unaided efforts. It is little to them that they are not complimented for what they achieve. They may

¹ *Frondes Agrestes*, p. 13.

² 2 Corinthians xii. 9, 10.

even be troubled when they hear themselves praised. We do not think first of the wire when we see the glory of the electric light, nor can it be otherwise when "the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord."

Not in a moment, scarcely in a lifetime, is this lesson of a true humility to be learned ; but even beginners may realise that the gain is out of all proportion to the pains. Those who are "filled with the Spirit" know well what is meant by "singing and making melody in the heart unto the Lord."¹ There is no joy in this world to compare with that which comes from the consciousness of the great Companionship. Without it we may have many possessions and be reckoned successful, while in our heart of hearts we must be sadly aware that we are poor indeed.

¹ Eph. v. 18, 19.

CHAPTER IX

WHAT TO EXPECT

THE title of this chapter is so comprehensive that it may be well to say at once that it is only intended to cover an account of two characteristics which, as the wisest spiritual directors are likely to agree, cannot fail to mark lives that are lived under the immediate direction and influence of the Holy Spirit.

In the first place, such lives will be *disciplined*. There can be no greater mistake than to imagine that freedom and vitality are irreconcilable with, or independent of, regulation and control. We are most free when we are most subject to a "law of liberty." It is no more certain that the steam-engine requires lines on which to run, than that emotional fervour, if it is to be employed to the greatest advantage, needs the security and ordered facility which can only be provided by discipline. The greater the power, the more necessary the rails; and the intenser the spiritual energy, the more indispensable the discipline.

For the authoritative expression of this doctrine, we may refer to a great utterance of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans. Speaking of what he knew from actual experience, he says, "The law of the Spirit of Life hath set me free from the law of sin and death."¹ Vital truths are best expressed in paradoxes, and we must allow that this dictum is sufficiently startling. With the utmost boldness it assures us that acceptance of law is the condition of freedom; that it is only by law that we can hope to be delivered from the bondage of law.

No one has more skilfully expounded St. Paul's meaning than his ardent admirer and gifted interpreter St. Augustine. "The law of sin," said that strong and candid thinker, speaking of what he himself had learned by bitter experience, "is the tyranny of habit."

In spite of many longings for release from the "hard slavery" of sinful indulgence, St. Augustine had found himself utterly impotent. "The new will in me was not strong enough to master the old time-hardened will"; "Acquiescence in habit produced necessity"; "I had myself armed habit against myself." Even when the feeling and desire of revolt had grown so strong in him that he was

¹ Romans viii. 2.

“mad unto salvation,” even then he says, “I was on the point of action, yet acted not”; “The worse which was ingrained was stronger in me than the better which was untrained.” “The tyranny of sin is the tyranny of habit by which the mind is dragged and kept against its will, yet deservedly because it formed the habit willingly.”¹ It was only when the Voice had summoned him to break with the old life by a complete renunciation of the old habits, and a deliberate and determined putting on of the new, that he discovered the way of release.

It may seem a long step to come down from the times of St. Paul and St. Augustine to our own day ; but as a matter of fact there is no difficulty in making the transition. We have had occasion more than once to call attention to instances in which the standpoint and teaching of long ago have been recovered and powerfully reinforced as the result of our latest investigations. We could not point to a more striking instance of this spiritual and intellectual continuity than this which we are now considering. Those who have followed the utterances of our modern psychologists know how urgently they insist upon the influence and importance of habit, and how confidently they teach that

¹ See Dr. Bigg's admirable edition of the *Confessions* in Messrs. Methuen's "Library of Devotion," pp. 269-289.

it is only through the means of good habits that there can be any certain prospect of escape from the bad. The change of phraseology must not hide from us the fact that we are listening to the same old story of freedom to be gained through the methods of discipline.

Here, for example, is a representative passage from Professor Starbuck : " The habits of early life which have cut out deep channels in the nervous system, and have left their impression there, are still easy outlets for the discharge of nervous force, provided it is not drifted off along new channels. The moment the enthusiasm declines and the tension which holds life steady and firm in the newly acquired channels is relaxed, one falls back into the old modes of activity . . . until the new set of neural habits, that correspond to the conduct of life on a spiritual plane, have become so deeply ingrained that life expresses itself naturally and easily through them. When this is accomplished, the old habits have lost their force." To which he is careful to add, " The new must be drilled in as indelibly as the old." ¹

So again Professor William James, in his graphic manner, describes the persistency which is needed

¹ *Psychology of Religion*, pp. 362 f.

if the new process is to be carried through. "In the acquisition of any new habit we must launch ourselves with as strong an initiative as possible. Accumulate all possible circumstances which shall reinforce the right motive, and envelop your resolution with every aid you know. . . . Never suffer an exception to occur till the new habit is securely rooted in your life. Every lapse is like letting fall a ball of string which one is winding up; a single slip undoes more than many turns will wind up again. Continuity of training is the great means of making the nervous system act infallibly right."¹

Elsewhere the Professor added the advice, "Do every day or two something for no other reason than that you would rather not do it, so that when the hour of dire need draws nigh it may find you not unnerved and untrained to stand the test."²

This reinforcement from the scientific side of the old insistence upon discipline is greatly to be welcomed by all who have the cultivation of character and conduct at heart. It gives us reason to hope that we may be about to witness a much needed revival of respect for a quality which has been too long in disfavour amongst us. Then we may expect

¹ *Talks to Teachers on Psychology*, pp. 68-71.

² *Principles of Psychology*, I, p. 126.

to see a new zeal for the arduous work of methodical self-training.

We simply cannot exaggerate the necessity for discipline. As one has said for whose example and guidance many have had good cause to be grateful :

“ Discipline, discipline, discipline, self-discipline. Be very strict with yourself. Compel yourself to obey rules. You are hurting so many besides yourself when you are not strict with yourself ; you are injuring those whom you like best, for you have less power over them when you have less power over yourself.”

The range of discipline is as wide as life. It must extend to feelings and thoughts and actions. It must include the mastery of temper and the control of appetite. There must be rules as to reading, and as to the time to be secured for devotion ; as to the apportionment of money, and the improvement of manners. One thing after another must be taken in hand systematically if this and that fault is to be corrected, and this and the other grace is to be cultivated. The labour of discipline most obviously belongs to youth ; but we dare not suppose that we have outgrown its necessity amid the altering conditions of age.

Never for a moment must it be forgotten that the

aim of Christian discipline is to follow the example of Christ and to be made like unto Him. The goal can only be reached in its fulness by all of us together ; but each has a particular and indispensable contribution to make. In proportion as we set the aim steadily before us will the Holy Spirit be enabled to perfect His work in us and through us.

We must pass on to speak of the other characteristic which is to be looked for in the life of one who is "led by the Spirit." The mention of it may bring relief to some who are not free from a misgiving lest a character which is rigorously disciplined should tend to become stiff and formal, and even pedantic. That misgiving will vanish if they will understand that an inevitable mark of a true spiritual progress is its genuine *naturalness*. That this is the case can be asserted without the least hesitation. The inner struggle may be long and severe, but the result when it appears ought to show no sign of the effort. Discipline is successful just in so far as it overcomes the obstacles which hinder the free and spontaneous expression of the life within.

There are not many things that we can say with certainty in regard to the supernatural, but this we may say, and it can scarcely be repeated too often—

The effect of the supernatural is the natural. That this is so may be proved by abundant evidence.

Think of that which we ordinarily describe as Nature. We are sure that the world must be the outcome of a higher will and purpose, if only because no other account of its existence can be intelligently and coherently given. This is the most obvious instance to show that the effect of the supernatural has been to produce the natural.

Or take the case of Art. When we look at some masterpiece of genius we often find ourselves exclaiming, "How natural!" and most of us would agree that there is no higher praise we could bestow.

Or again, there are the phenomena of Inspiration. It has at last been recognised by all of us that the influence of the Divine does not overmaster and cancel the human element, but, on the contrary, liberates and accentuates it, heightening the personality and making it the more vivid and distinctive. The prophet, when he is lifted above himself, becomes more truly than ever a "son of man."

And there is yet more to be said. The Incarnation will always be the supreme revelation of the harmony between the supernatural and the natural. It is because no other has been so

perfectly human as "the Man Christ Jesus" that all types and classes of mankind have been drawn to Him, and have found in Him the realisation of whatever has been noblest and strongest, and purest and loftiest in their hopes and ideals. We of this generation have been slowly recovering the conviction that the perfection of humanity in our Lord was the direct consequence of His Divinity. If we could have seen Him as He appeared in the flesh, we may be sure that we should have been impressed by nothing so much as by His extraordinary naturalness. We should have detected no trace of any suggestion of pose, or straining after originality; no sort of singularity of dress, or manner, or speech. He might have passed unnoticed among His contemporaries had it not been for a dignity and beauty and holiness which could not be hid. To Him therefore we shall ever point as the unique illustration of the law that where there is most of God, there is also the most of Man.

We must believe that what is true of the Head will be found to be true in their measure of the members. We may dismiss the notion, if ever we have entertained it, that to be religious is to be narrow in our sympathies, and out of touch with the interests of ordinary life. The more our lives are disciplined the more we shall be set free to enter

whole-heartedly into the sorrows and joys of others. Those who know us will find us more companionable and lovable in proportion as our minds and spirits are attuned to the mind and Spirit of Christ.

If we are to put this further practical counsel into simple language, we may say : Avoid both extremes of eccentricity and conventionality ; shun affectations and mannerisms ; be ready to learn from all, but never try to be other than yourself. Believe that you were made to fulfil a special purpose ; and be sure that, when the work of your training is at last complete and “ the fruit of the Spirit ” is fully ripe, the evidence will be seen in a delightful and wonderful naturalness.

EPILOGUE

(What follows must be taken as having come from an imaginary correspondent.)

I HAD often wondered whether I should ever see what I had often dreamed of, a really Christian congregation ; a society possessed of, or rather possessed by, a common life, an organic body with a living membership—not merely a club in which the bond of fellowship was self-chosen and temporary to suit its own convenience, but a family where very different types were included and welcomed. I wanted to find a community like that of the Apostolic days which, by its effectiveness and attractiveness, not unmixed with a certain unearthliness, would once again make upon beholders the blended impression of “great power” and “great grace” and “great fear.”¹ Was it conceivable that such a society, filled with the Spirit of Christ, and presenting something more than a merely theoretical solution of the problem of the whole and the

¹ Acts iv. 33, v. 11.

parts, could be seen actually at work in face of our modern needs and opportunities ?

At last a report reached me which made me desire to hear more, and, if possible, go and judge for myself. It was clear that something was arousing a good deal of interest. The report came from a parish where the people were evidently not afraid to venture upon experiments. I was told of a well-attended Eucharist held at an hour when the number of communicants might be expected to be largest, and followed by a common meal which was intended to fulfil the purpose of the *Agapé* of primitive times. There were conferences at which religious and social problems were considered with a view to the formation of a corporate judgment. Opportunity was given to women to employ their distinctive gifts, and the barriers between classes seemed to have been surmounted to a remarkable extent. Altogether it was plain that a movement was astir, and that the thing was worth looking into. Certainly I must go and see ; and I went.

It happened that I had a friend in the place, and he was good enough to ask me to be his guest. He was a shrewd though kindly critic of persons and affairs, a man whose opinion I might trust, and who would put me in the way of seeing how matters stood. I soon found, indeed, that my own observa-

tions gave me a good deal to think about. I will try to put down some of the things which impressed me most.

I was specially struck by the prevailing sense of fellowship—and fellowship of a high and far-reaching order. There seemed to be a consciousness of belonging, not to a local Church only, nor to a national Church only, but to the great Church which had been for ages, which included the living and the departed, and of which the ascended Lord was the actively directing Head. This consciousness of fellowship gave a feeling of more than earthly range and elevation to the worship, and especially to participation in the Eucharist. The old phraseology of the prayers seemed appropriate for those who knew that they were taking their part in continuing to present the tribute of devotion in which the generations before them had joined. Everything was done which could give dignity to the service. The music was carefully rendered, and was evidently familiar. It was pleasant to see the orchestra back in its place, and to find that the monopoly of a few singers had come to an end. There were intervals of silence which the people had been taught to value and use as times of corporate perception and concentrated spiritual effort. These intervals sometimes followed a sermon in

which a particular aspect of the Christian revelation, or some special responsibility of Church membership, had been dwelt upon. I noticed that at Even-song the sermon came immediately after the anthem. This meant that the service was concluded with prayers and special intercessions. It seemed to be a gain and to involve the least possible disturbance of the accustomed order.

The next thing that struck me as marking a new departure was the way in which it had come to be taken for granted that a Christian congregation must be mobilised and maintained on a war footing with a view to spiritual service and aggressive enterprise. There was no notion that the purpose of membership had been accomplished when those who had worshipped together were separated on leaving the Church. As a matter of fact they did not always separate at once. The earlier hour of the Sunday service left an opportunity of which good use might be made. Later in the morning a conference could be held, or a theological class, or study circles for the more detailed examination of missionary or social questions. The conferences afforded a delightful opportunity for the exercise of various gifts. At one which I attended a difficult question of social morality was considered. Decided differences of opinion were expressed, but always

with courtesy and good feeling. One effect of the conferences was to make all who took part in them glad to bend the knee together in humble dependence upon Him who is wont to give wisdom liberally to those who are united in asking.

It must not be supposed that in all this there was any want of robustness or lack of humour. The tone was not what would commonly be described as "pietistic." The atmosphere was spiritual, but it was bracing and practical; and great stress was laid on the value of lucid thinking and accurate knowledge.

The vicar was a man who had spent some years in the overseas mission field. That, perhaps, had helped to widen his outlook, and to show him the importance of the methods of the earliest missionary Church. I could see that he and his fellow clergy were keenly interested in many of the present proposals for Church reform, and more especially in the line adopted in a recent report of a Committee of the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury, which has suggested for serious attention the points originally emphasised in what has been called "The Jerusalem Quadrilateral." According to this, the vitally important elements of Churchmanship were reckoned to be "the teaching of the Apostles" (as we find it expressed in the Epistles); "the

fellowship" (the practical exhibition of the passion for sharing); "the breaking of the Bread" (the Holy Communion as the principal service); and "the prayers" (or, as we might say, the Prayer meeting).¹

And how, it will be asked, had the community-spirit affected the ordering of social relations? Had it produced a general levelling, or involved risks of undesirable familiarity? So far as I could learn, there was no complaint of anything of the sort. All classes were represented with their distinctions of wealth and education. No attempts had been made to obliterate differences. On the contrary, they seemed to be accepted as adding an interest to intercourse, and as affording occasions to be welcomed for mutual service. I did notice that those who had much in the way of material possessions were careful not to obtrude the fact—as for instance in the style of their dress—upon those who were evidently less well off. It looked as if values were estimated rather by what men and women could do in the Church, than by their positions and occupations in the world. If a single word could

¹ This report was reissued as one of the pamphlets of the National Mission. It is entitled *The Church's Preparation for the Return of the Men from the War*, and can be obtained for 2d. from the S.P.C.K.

describe the general feeling and attitude, it is perhaps the word "respect"—respect for personality, and for the qualities which lie deepest and will last longest.

It is worth noting that there was not the great multiplicity of organisations such as is ordinarily to be met with in what is considered a well-worked parish. There was a Church Council of some size, which had a good many committees, and these periodically reported to the whole congregation. It was not thought desirable to have all kinds of separate organisations for men and for women, though special sub-committees might be formed to deal with particular needs as they arose. The main function of a religious society was held to be the creation and diffusion of the spirit and temper in which what is commonly called secular business should be carried on; and it was felt that the New Testament idea of "witness" ought to be restored to the place from which our active temperaments have generally dislodged it, in favour of what we vaguely describe as "work."

Another thing struck me as noticeable. This was that it becomes possible to restore a real measure of discipline when once Church membership is felt to be a privilege from which it is a pain and a loss to be debarred. I did not hear of many cases, but

evidently there had been some in which faults had been dealt with, and in which open acknowledgment had been required, to be followed by open restoration. It was all done in a spirit of brotherliness, and only because the good name and influence of the whole society was felt to be dependent upon the character of its members.

I was anxious to know how far the desire for fellowship had affected relations with the other parishes and the other religious bodies in the neighbourhood. From what I could learn, this part of the Christian duty had not been forgotten. There was no thought that anything was to be accomplished by an impatient ignoring of difficulties; nor was it supposed that the problems of unity would be solved by hastily conceived schemes which failed to do justice to deeply rooted convictions. Combined conferences had been held, and a good deal was hoped from certain arrangements that had been made for united action. While there was no unwise haste, there was no attempt to conceal the misery and scandal of our present unhappy divisions.

If I am to sum up my impressions, I should say that I had learned once again, and this time by means of a most valuable object lesson, that it is only in the fellowship of the whole that the fullest freedom and development of individuals is

possible ; and that it is only as we take steps to make the life of the Body of Christ a practical reality, that we shall ever know what the Holy Spirit can do. I came away with fresh hope that we may ere long see this best kind of spiritual revival going forward, and more certain than ever that, if the evidence and truth of Christianity is to be effectively presented, it will be by means of the experience which is at once both corporate and individual.

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